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# Teenagers Who Are Vaccinated Don't Need to Wear Mask or Physically Distance at Summer Camps, CDC Says in Latest Guidance

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Teenagers fully vaccinated against Covid-19 don't need to wear masks or physically distance at summer camps, federal health officials said Friday, the latest easing of restrictions for individuals inoculated against the virus.

Even so, teenagers at summer camps who are not vaccinated should continue to wear masks indoors, and outdoors where the virus is spreading, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The V.I. Dept. of Sports, Parks and Recreation [on Wednesday said](#) it would host in-person summer camps this year that will include multiple sporting programs for participants. But the

events will be without physical contact; instead individual skills and conditioning will be the focus, Calvert White, D.S.P.R. commissioner said on Wednesday.

On Saturday, Mr. White told the Consortium the department would continue with its plans despite the CDC's latest guidance. "The CDC guidelines are recommendations. It's not mandatory or law when the CDC says something," he said. "So the fact that they said that, we will keep it in consideration but keep in mind vaccinated people still can contract and pass the virus." Mr. White also pointed to the CDC's easing of restrictions [relative to the wearing of masks](#), and Governor Albert Bryan's decision to [maintain the territory's No Mask, No Service order](#).

Some summer camp organizers on the mainland said they would not make last-minute changes based on the CDC's latest guidance, according to the Wall Street Journal. "When we have the opportunity where everybody is fully vaccinated, you can get back to no masks, no distancing and a normal camp experience," Erin Sauber-Schatz, who heads the CDC's Community Interventions and Critical Populations Task Force, told WSJ.

The Food and Drug Administration on May 10 approved Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine for children ages 12-15; people ages 16 and older were already approved for the shot. Dr. Sauber-Schatz said about 2.5 million children in the U.S. have already taken the vaccine. Attempts to reach V.I. Dept. of Health Commissioner, Justa Encarnacion, or the territory's chief epidemiologist, Dr. Esther Ellis, were unsuccessful.

Relative to the current plans for summer camping in the territory, each camp will be limited to no more than 50 campers, with some accommodating only 25. Campers will be split into pods of 10 and there will be one adult per 10 campers. This will help with contact tracing in the event of a positive Covid case, Mr. White explained.

The camps will begin on June 14 and end on July 23, and are open to children ages 7-17. The cost for D.S.P.R.'s 2021 Summer Camps is \$125 per camper (\$100 per second sibling), an average of about \$20 a week for a five-day, eight-hour program for the first child. Mr. White was proud of the cost and expressed doubt that a 6-week camp would be as reasonable as \$125 anywhere.

Background checks will be completed for all staff and contract workers.

There will be facial scanners, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer stations, sneeze guard desk shields, hand washing stations, masks, gloves, cleaning supplies, and sanitizing defoggers. There will also be specific guidelines for pick-up and drop-off among other protocols to ensure the safety of campers and staff. At the end of his testimony, Mr. White said, "Our goal is to have a successful six weeks without incident. However, I must put it on the record that there is no blueprint for this. Instead, every day will be a learning experience for us and we will adjust accordingly."

The location of the camps are the Alvin McBean Sports Complex, Emile Griffith Park, Joseph Aubain Ballfield, Kirwin Terrace Ballfield, Winston Raymo Center, Lionel Roberts Stadium, and Lockhart Elementary School Sprung on St. Thomas. On St. Croix the locations are DC Canegata, Rudy Krieger Complex, Isaac Boyne's Complex and The Renholdt Jackson Sports Complex. On St. John there will be an outdoor adventure summer camp.

Applications can be downloaded from the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation's website in the forms section [here](#). Enrollment will be decided on a first-come, first-serve basis.

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